

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DAMASC 06501 161114Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 EB-08
PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 (ISO) W
-----053093 161249Z /13

R 161100Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5247
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 6501

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAIR, PINS, SY
SUBJ: POST MORTEM ON JAPANESE HANDLING OF JAL HIJACKING

1. FOLLOWING REVIEW OF JAPANESE HANDLING OF DAMASCUS
PORTION OF RECENT JAL HIJACKING MAY BE OF USE IN POSSIBLE
FUTURE HIJACKING SITUATIONS INVOLVING DAMASCUS.

2. JAPANESE EMBASSY DAMASCUS WAS ALERTED BY TELEPHONE
CALL FROM FOREIGN MINISTRY IN TOKYO. FOREIGN MINISTRY
KEPT TELPHONE LINE OPEN THROUGHOUT PERIOD A/C ON GROUND
IN DAMASCUS (ABOUT 6 HOURS). EMBASSY ALSO ESTABLISHED
OPEN PHONE LINK TO AIRPORT, THUS ASSURING ALMOST
INSTANTANEOUS COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTRY IN
TOKYO AND JAPANESE OFFICIALS AT DAMASCUS AIRPORT.

3. JAPANESE AMBASSADOR CALLED DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER
AT HOME AND WORKED THROUGH HIM TO OBTAIN SYRIAN PERMISSION
FOR JAL A/C TO LAND AD REFUEL.

4. JAPANESE DCM (ARABIC SPEAKING) WITH CHIEF LOCAL
WENT TO AIRPORT AND MET WITH AIRPORT MANAGER WHO
AUTHORIZED FULL-TIME JAPANESE USE OF TELEPHONE IN VIP
LOUNGE WHICH IS INDEPENDT OF AIRPORT SWITCHBOARD.
A JAPANESE EMBOFF SAT ON THIS PHONE KEEPING THE LINE
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OPEN FOR SIX HOURS.

5. JAPANESE DCM WAS DENIED ENTRANCE TO CONTROL TOWER
UNTIL BY CHANCE HE WAS ABLE TO MAKE DIRECT APPEAL TO
MAJOR GENERAL NAJI JAMIL, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF DEFENSE,
AS LATTER WAS ARRIVING TO TAKE CHARGE OF SYRIAN SIDE
OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH HIJACKERS. CONTROL TOWER AND

PHONE IN VIP LOUNGE WERE SOME DISTANCE APART,
NECESSITATING RUNNERS TO COMPLETE COMMUNICATIONS LINK-UP.

6. COMMENT: JAPANESE COULD HAVE IMPROVED THEIR
AIRPORT ARRANGEMENTS BY WORKING THROUGH AIR FORCE
INTELLIGENCE AUTHORITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR OVERALL
AIRPORT SECURITY RATHER THAN THE CIVILIAN AIRPORT
MANAGER. OTHERWISE, THEIR OPERATION RAN SMOOTHLY.
DEPARTMENT MAY WISH CONSIDER SIMILAR DIRECT TELEPHONE
LINK IN POSSIBLE FUTURE INCIDENTS.

7. DURING LATEST LUFTHANSA HIJACKING, DEPT TELEPHONED
AMBASSADOR AT RESIDENCE (336087). TELEPHONING EMBASSY
(332315, 332814) WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER SINCE MSG
ALWAYS ON DUTY AND RESIDENCES OF AMBASSADOR, DCM,
AND DATT ARE ALL REACHABLE ON EMBASSY EXTENSIONS.
MURPHY

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-Oct-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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